SCHOOL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES (SLADS) - BAGAMOYO

A RESEARCH REPORT ON:

AN ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN READING HABIT ON TANZANIA PUBLIC LIBRARY: A CASE STUDY OF BAGAMOYO PUBLIC LIBRARY.

BY

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A Research Report Submitted to the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) as a Partial Fulfillment of Requirement for the Award of Ordinary Diploma in Library and Information Studies.

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that she has read and hereby recommended for acceptance by the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies a research report entitled **"An Assessment of Children's Reading Habits in Tanzania Public Library"** as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Ordinary Diploma in Library and Information Management Studies (SLADS).

Supervisor's Name: ……

Signature: ……

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DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my highest almighty God, the creator and source of everything in the universe. To my beloved Mother Misra, Ngoda and Aunt Neema Ngoda and also to my beloved Grand mother Mrs Ngoda I always pray for you, love you so much and I appreciate you’re to my friends may the almighty God bless you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TLSB…. Tanzania Library Services Board

URT……. United Republic of Tanzania

UNESCO… United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

OECD……Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

AfLIA…..... African Library and Information Associations and Institutions

SLADS…. School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies

I CT……. Information and Communication Technology

NRP……. National Reading Program

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed children's reading habits in Tanzania public libraries, with a case study of Bagamoyo Public Library. Specifically, the study sought to examine the frequency of children's library visits, identify factors influencing their reading engagement, evaluate the effectiveness of existing library services, and explore challenges hindering the promotion of a sustainable reading culture.

A descriptive survey research design and mixed-methods approaches were employed. The study involved a sample of 25 respondents, comprising 20 children selected through simple random sampling and 5 teachers and library staff selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages with the aid of Microsoft Excel, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis.

The findings revealed that most children visited the library infrequently, with only a small group attending daily. Parental involvement and access to resources were identified as the strongest factors influencing reading habits, while digital distractions and peer influence played lesser roles. School partnerships and story hours were found to be the most effective library services, whereas limited book availability and low parental involvement emerged as the main challenges.

The study concludes that children's reading habits in Bagamoyo Public Library are shaped primarily by parental support and resource availability. It recommends strengthening parental involvement, improving resource provision, enhancing library programs, and expanding school partnerships and outreach strategies to foster a sustainable reading culture among children.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter comprised the following aspects: background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, specific objective, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and limitations of the study, as well as definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading ware universally acknowledged as a cornerstone of education and human development. It was not merely a mechanical skill but a cognitive and social process that enabled individuals to acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking, and participate meaningfully in society. Krashen (2014) emphasized that reading was the single most important activity for academic success, as it provided access to information across all disciplines. For students, reading was indispensable for mastering subjects, while for workers, teachers, and community members, it was a tool for staying informed, productive, and civically engaged.

Globally, the promotion of reading habits among children had been prioritized by international organizations, governments, and educational institutions. UNESCO (2022) addressed that early exposure to reading materials significantly improved literacy outcomes, enhanced cognitive development, and promoted lifelong learning. Public libraries played a vital role in this process by providing equitable access to books, digital resources, and structured programs such as story hours and reading clubs. However, challenges remained. The OECD (2021) reported that children worldwide faced barriers such as limited access to libraries, socioeconomic constraints, and the growing influence of digital distractions.

In developed countries, children's reading habits were supported by strong library systems and national literacy initiatives. Libraries in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe had integrated digital technologies, offered e-books, interactive platforms, and community programs to sustain children's interest in reading. Despite competition from digital entertainment, these countries had modernized library services, blending print and digital resources to maintain consistent reading habits.

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In Africa, children's reading habits were shaped by cultural, economic, and educational realities. While countries such as Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana had invested in library networks, many children, especially in rural areas, exhibited low reading frequency due to poverty, language barriers, and insufficient outreach (AfLIA, 2020). In Tanzania, public libraries were managed by the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) under the Tanzania Library Services Act of 1975. These libraries provided free access to books and information resources and ran programs such as story hours, book clubs, and school partnerships. Recent initiatives, including the National Reading Program, emphasized the importance of libraries in supporting education reforms (TLSB, 2023).

Despite these efforts, children's reading habits remained underdeveloped. Limited book availability, inadequate parental involvement, outdated collections, and the growing influence of digital media undermined library utilization (United Republic of Tanzania URT, 2021). Mbwambo and Mtega (2019) found that many Tanzanian children, particularly in urban areas, preferred digital content over traditional books due to increased access to smartphones and online entertainment.

Nevertheless, libraries remained crucial for literacy development. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2020) showed that regular library visits were associated with improved academic performance, creativity, and social engagement. In Bagamoyo, where this study was focused, TLSB-managed libraries were intended to serve children. Yet, preliminary evidence suggested that many children in this region exhibited inconsistent reading habits, with limited participation in library programs. This raised important questions about the effectiveness of current initiatives and the barriers children faced in cultivating a reading culture.

Public libraries were mandated to promote literacy and foster a reading culture among children. However, evidence from Tanzania revealed weak reading habits, with many children showing low interest in library use and relying mainly on school activities or parental guidance for reading (Mbwambo & Mtega, 2019; AfLIA, 2020). Despite initiatives such as the National Reading Program and campaigns by the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) (URT, 2021; TLSB, 2023), there was limited evidence on their effectiveness in cultivating consistent reading habits among children.

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Challenges such as limited book availability, inadequate parental involvement, outdated collections, and the growing influence of digital media continued to undermine library utilization. In Bagamoyo District, preliminary observations suggested that children's participation in library programs remained inconsistent, raising concerns about the ability of public libraries to effectively nurture a reading culture.

This study therefore sought to critically examine children's reading habits in Tanzania's public libraries, focusing on the frequency of library visits, the factors that influenced reading engagement, the effectiveness of existing library services, and the challenges faced in promoting a sustainable reading culture.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Public libraries were mandated to promote literacy and foster a reading culture among children. However, evidence from Tanzania reveals weak reading habits, with many children showing low interest in library use and relying mainly on school activities or parental guidance for reading (Mbwambo & Mtega, 2019; AfLIA, 2020). Despite initiatives such as the National Reading Program and campaigns by the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) (URT, 2021 United republic of Tanzania; TLSB, 2023), there is limited evidence on their effectiveness in cultivating consistent reading habits among children.

Challenges such as limited book availability, inadequate parental involvement, outdated collections, and the growing influence of digital media continue to undermine library utilization. In Bagamoyo District, preliminary observations suggest that children's participation in library programs remains inconsistent, raising concerns about the ability of public libraries to effectively nurture a reading culture.

This study therefore seeks to critically examine children's reading habits in Tanzania's public libraries, focusing on the frequency of library visits, the factors influencing reading engagement, the effectiveness of existing library services, and the challenges faced in promoting a sustainable reading culture.

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1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The Major aim to assess children's reading habits in Tanzania's public libraries.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to:

i. To examine the frequency of children's library visits and reading activities.

ii. To Identify the factors that influenced children's reading habits, including access to resources, parental involvement, and digital distractions.

iii. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing library services and programs in promoting reading among children.

iv. To explore the challenges that children faced in promoting a reading culture within public libraries.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study were:

i. What were the patterns and frequency of children's library visits and reading activities in public libraries?
ii. What factors influenced children's engagement with reading in public libraries?
iii. How effective were the existing library services and programs in fostering children's reading habits?
iv. What challenges hindered the promotion of a reading culture among children in public libraries?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study was significant for policymakers, educators, librarians, and community stakeholders in Tanzania. By examining children's reading habits and the challenges they faced in public libraries, it provided evidence-based insights to guide interventions that

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strengthened literacy and supported national education goals, including the Tanzania Development Vision 2025.

For the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) and librarians, the findings informed improvements in program design, resource allocation, and outreach strategies. Educators and parents benefited from practical recommendations on cultivating reading habits both at home and in schools, which potentially led to improved academic performance and reduced educational disparities.

Academically, the study contributed to the body of literature on library science and child literacy in developing contexts, offering a model for similar assessments in other African countries. Ultimately, the study promoted a sustainable reading culture that supported lifelong learning, creativity, and social progress.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focused on assessing children's reading habits in Bagamoyo District libraries, specifically targeting children. The assessment examined reading patterns, influencing factors, and the effectiveness of library services and programs in promoting a reading culture. Data were collected through surveys, interviews, and observations. The study was limited to public libraries managed by the TLSB and did not include private or school libraries.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Self-reported data: Much of the information was collected through surveys and interviews with children and parents. Such data were subject to recall inaccuracies, exaggeration, or social desirability bias, where respondents provided answers they believed were expected rather than their true experiences. This influenced the accuracy of findings on reading frequency and habits.

Sampling constraints: The study was confined to selected public libraries in Bagamoyo District. As a result, the findings did not fully represent the situation in other regions of Tanzania, particularly rural areas with different socioeconomic and cultural contexts. This introduced the possibility of sampling bias and reduced external validity.

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Financial limitations: Limited financial resources restricted the scope of data collection, including the ability to cover a larger sample size or employ more advanced research tools. This constraint also limited the inclusion of diverse library settings, thereby narrowing the breadth of the study. To mitigate this, cost-effective approaches and accessible study areas were prioritized.

Researcher experience: As this was the researcher's first major project, limited experience posed challenges in planning, execution, and data analysis. This affected the depth of interpretation and methodological rigor. To address this, the researcher sought guidance from supervisors, collaborated with peers, and consulted experienced professionals to strengthen the study's credibility.

Contextual limitations: External factors such as school schedules, cultural practices, and children's access to digital devices influenced reading habits but fell outside the direct control of the study. These contextual variables complicated the interpretation of results, as they interacted with library usage in complex ways.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Children's Reading Habits: This referred to the specific patterns of reading engagement among children. It encompassed both recreational and academic reading, as well as participation in library-based activities such as book clubs, storytelling sessions, and reading competitions. Children's reading habits were shaped by multiple factors, including parental involvement, school support, peer influence, and access to diverse reading materials. In this study, children's reading habits were assessed in terms of frequency, duration, type of materials read, and level of participation in library programs (Mickey, 2020).

Literacy Development: Literacy development was the process through which individuals acquired, improved, and sustained reading, writing, and comprehension skills. It was a lifelong process that began with early exposure to print and continued through formal education and community engagement. Literacy development was influenced by access to resources, the quality of educational programs, and the encouragement provided by families and communities. In the context of this study, literacy development was considered both an outcome of effective library services and a key indicator of children's academic and social progress (Patty, 2018).

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Public Libraries: Public libraries were government-funded institutions established to provide free and equitable access to books, information resources, and literacy programs. In Tanzania, they were managed by the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) under the Tanzania Library Services Act of 1975. Public libraries served as community hubs for learning, offering services such as book lending, reading clubs, storytelling sessions, and digital resources. Their primary aim was to promote a reading culture, support lifelong learning, and contribute to national education goals. In this study, public libraries were examined as central institutions in fostering children's reading habits (Mickey, 2020).

Reading Habits: Reading habits referred to the regular practices and behaviors of individuals in engaging with printed or digital reading materials. This included the frequency of reading, the types of materials chosen (such as textbooks, storybooks, newspapers, or digital content), and the purposes for which reading was undertaken (educational, recreational, or informational). Strong reading habits were associated with improved academic performance, creativity, and social awareness. In this study, reading habits were analyzed specifically among children, with attention to how libraries influenced their consistency and quality of reading practices (Leashed, 2016).

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

A literature review was a body of text that aimed to review the critical points of existing knowledge, including substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic (Henry, 2018). In this study, the literature review focused on children's reading habits in public libraries. It examined the frequency of library visits, factors that influenced reading habits, the effectiveness of library services, and the challenges that children faced in promoting a reading culture. This review also identified gaps in existing research to justify the need for assessing children's reading habits in Bagamoyo District libraries.

2.1 Frequency of Children's Library Visits and Reading Activities

Globally, research consistently highlighted the importance of regular library visits in fostering literacy development. Krashen (2014) argued that consistent reading was the single most important activity for academic success, noting that children who frequently accessed libraries benefited from diverse materials that strengthened comprehension and critical thinking. UNESCO (2022) reinforced this view, showing that children who visited libraries at least once a week demonstrated stronger vocabulary growth and better reading fluency compared to those with irregular attendance. These findings established a clear global link between structured library engagement and academic achievement.

In developed countries, the role of libraries had expanded beyond traditional book lending. OECD (2021) reported that structured programs such as reading clubs, digital platforms, and interactive activities increased children's frequency of library use. In these contexts, libraries were not only academic spaces but also hubs for recreational reading and social interaction, making them attractive to children and families alike.

By contrast, in many African countries, the potential of libraries was undermined by structural and resource-related challenges. AfLIA (2020) observed that limited infrastructure, inadequate age-appropriate materials, and long distances to library facilities reduced children's participation in library programs. Rural children, in particular, faced significant barriers that restricted their ability to engage consistently with library resources.

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Tanzania presented a more specific scenario within this broader African context. Mbwambo and Mtega (2019) found that many children visited libraries inconsistently, often only when required by school assignments. Voluntary reading was rare, and urban children increasingly preferred digital entertainment over library visits. This suggested that while libraries existed, their potential to foster literacy was weakened by cultural habits, digital distractions, and limited outreach efforts.

Taken together, these perspectives showed that while frequent library visits were globally linked to literacy success, the Tanzanian case highlighted how structural, cultural, and technological challenges undermined children's engagement with libraries. Addressing these barriers required both infrastructural investment and innovative strategies to make libraries more accessible and appealing to children. Children who grew up in homes with readily available books and parents who read aloud developed stronger reading habits. These findings established the foundation for examining children's reading habits in Bagamoyo District libraries.

2.2 Factors Influencing Children's Reading Habits

Globally, scholars agreed that children's reading habits were shaped by a combination of socioeconomic, demographic, technological, and motivational influences. Adekola (2015) emphasized that parental education and income levels strongly determined literacy practices at home. Families with higher educational attainment tended to provide more books and encouraged regular reading, while children from low-income households often lacked access to adequate resources. Lee (2021) further highlighted the importance of the home environment, showing that children who grew up in homes with readily available books and parents who read aloud developed stronger reading habits. This established a global consensus that family background and home literacy environments were critical drivers of reading engagement.

In developed countries, these factors were reinforced by structured programs and cultural practices that promoted reading. Sanacore (2015) argued that children who read for pleasure daily acquired experiences that gave them a larger sense of purpose in reading, with voluntary reading emerging as the strongest predictor of lifelong literacy. OECD (2021) studies showed that libraries and schools in developed contexts often integrated digital platforms, reading clubs, and interactive activities, ensuring that children were exposed to

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both academic and leisure reading opportunities. This structured support helped sustain reading habits across age groups and social classes.

In Africa, however, challenges remained more pronounced. AfLIA (2020) noted that limited infrastructure, inadequate age-appropriate materials, and long distances to library facilities reduced children's participation in reading programs. Adetunji (2016) added that demographic factors such as age, gender, and social class influenced reading preferences, with younger children showing enthusiasm for storybooks while older children leaned toward academic texts. Gender differences also emerged, with girls generally showing stronger interest in leisure reading compared to boys. Pandian (2019) observed that technology played a dual role: while television, smartphones, and computers often competed with traditional reading, digital platforms could be harnessed positively if integrated into library services.

Tanzania reflected these broader African challenges in a more specific way. Mbwambo and Mtega (2019) found that children's reading habits were often shaped by school requirements rather than voluntary interest. Many children visited libraries only when compelled by assignments, while voluntary reading remained rare. Urban children increasingly preferred digital entertainment over books, suggesting that cultural habits and technological distractions weakened the role of libraries and homes in fostering literacy. The lack of parental modeling and limited outreach programs further exacerbated irregular reading practices.

These perspectives showed that while global and developed contexts emphasized structured support and voluntary engagement, African and Tanzanian realities highlighted the impact of socioeconomic barriers, cultural norms, and digital competition. Strengthening children's reading habits in Tanzania therefore required not only infrastructural improvements but also strategies that encouraged voluntary reading and integrated technology in ways that supported, rather than undermined, literacy development.

2.3 Effectiveness of Existing Library Services and Programs

Globally, structured library programs were shown to play a critical role in enhancing literacy outcomes. (UNESCO,2022) emphasized that initiatives such as reading clubs, storytelling sessions, and interactive workshops significantly improve children's vocabulary,

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comprehension, and motivation to read. These findings highlight that libraries, when equipped with well-designed programs, can serve as powerful literacy hubs that go beyond book lending to foster sustained engagement.

In developed countries, libraries often integrate families and communities into their programs, strengthening their effectiveness. The National Literacy Trust (2022) in the UK demonstrated that parental involvement in library activities increases children's reading frequency. Libraries that actively engage parents through family reading days, workshops, and community events are more successful in sustaining children's interest in reading. This suggests that the effectiveness of library services is amplified when they adopt a holistic approach that includes both children and their caregivers.

Across Africa, however, the effectiveness of library services is often undermined by structural and resource-related challenges. (AfLIA, 2020) noted that limited outreach, inadequate staffing, and insufficient resources reduce children's participation in library programs. Without qualified librarians and modern collections, libraries struggle to deliver meaningful literacy support. These constraints highlight the gap between the potential of libraries and their actual impact in many African contexts.

Tanzania reflects these challenges in a more specific way. The UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA (URT, 2021) reported that outdated collections, underfunding, and low patronage undermine the effectiveness of library services. Many libraries fail to attract children beyond school-related visits, limiting their role in promoting voluntary reading. (TLSB,2023) introduced initiatives such as the National Reading Program to strengthen children's engagement with libraries. However, evidence of its impact remains limited, with preliminary reports suggesting that participation is inconsistent. This indicates that while efforts are being made to revitalize library services, significant barriers remain in terms of resources, outreach, and cultural engagement.

Taken together, these show that library services can be highly effective when they are well-resourced, community-driven, and inclusive of families. Yet in Tanzania, structural weaknesses, outdated collections, and limited participation weaken their impact. Addressing these challenges were require sustained investment, modernization of collections, and innovative programming that makes libraries attractive spaces for both academic and recreational reading.

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2.4 Research Gap

The literature review identified several factors that influenced children's reading habits, including parental involvement, teacher support, access to resources, and digital distractions. It also highlighted the types of materials children read and the reasons for reading them. However, gaps remained concerning the frequency of library visits, the effectiveness of existing library services, and the specific challenges that were faced in promoting a reading culture in Tanzania's public libraries.

This study sough**t** to fill these gaps by critically **assessing** children's reading habits in Bagamoyo District libraries, focused on usage patterns, influencing factors, program effectiveness, and challenges in cultivating a sustainable reading culture.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the methodological framework that was used to assess children's reading habits in Bagamoyo Public Library. It outlined the research design, research type, study area, population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data processing and analysis, and ethical considerations. The methodology ensured that the study objectives were systematically addressed and that findings were reliable, valid, and ethically sound.

3.1 Research Design

Research design defined as a plan, structure, and strategy of investigation aimed at obtaining answers to research questions (Kumar, 2009). Given the descriptive nature of this study, a **descriptive survey design** would be employed. This design is appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect original data on children's reading habits and allows the use of multiple methods such as questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentary reviews. Similar approaches have been used in literacy studies to capture children's reading frequency and library use patterns (Mbwambo & Mtega, 2019).

3.2 Research Type

Kothari (2004) distinguished between qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research focused on subjective assessments of attitudes, opinions, and behaviors, while quantitative research involved systematic investigation using measurable data and statistical techniques. This study adopted a mixed-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of children's reading habits and the effectiveness of library programs. Mixed methods were particularly effective in literacy research, as they allowed measurable patterns to be complemented by deeper insights into motivations and challenges (Sanacore, 2015; UNESCO, 2022).

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3.3 Area of the Study

The area of study refers to the geographical location where research is conducted (Krishna, 2005). This study will be carried out in Bagamoyo Public Library, which is managed by the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB).

3.3.1 Background of Bagamoyo Public Library

Bagamoyo Public Library was part of the TLSB network established under the Tanzania Library Services Act of 1975. It provides free access to books and information resources and runs programs such as story hours, book clubs, and school partnerships. The library serves children aged 6–14 years and plays a crucial role in supporting literacy development in Bagamoyo District (TLSB, 2023).

3.4 Population of the Study

Population refers to the entire group of individuals relevant to a study (Kothari, 2002). The target population for this research will include children aged 6–14 **years**, as well as teachers and librarians who support library programs. The estimated population size is 100 individuals.

3.5 Sample Size

Sample size refers to the number of respondents selected from the population (Kothari, 2002). From the total population of 100, a sample of **25 respondents** will be selected to represent the study population. This sample will include 20 children, 3 teachers, and 2 librarians. The sample size is chosen to ensure representativeness while remaining manageable for in-depth analysis (Adetunji, 2016).

3.6 Sampling Techniques

Sampling techniques involve selecting a subset of the population for study (Komb & Tromp, 2006). This study will use both probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

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3.6.1 Simple Random Sampling

Simple random sampling ensures that each individual in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Kothari, 2002). This technique will be used to select 20 children, ensuring fairness and representativeness.

3.6.2 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling relies on the researcher's judgment to select respondents with relevant knowledge. This technique will be used to select 3 teachers and 2 librarians, ensuring inclusion of participants with specialized insights into children's reading habits and library services (AfLIA, 2020).

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Data collection refers to the process of gathering information for a study (Krishna, 2004). Both primary and secondary data will be collected.

3.7.1 Primary Data

Primary data were original sources collected directly by the researcher (Krishnaswami, 2004). In this study, primary data will be obtained through questionnaires and interviews.

Questionnaires: Structured questionnaires would be distributed to 10 children. Both open-ended and close-ended questions will be used to capture reading frequency, preferences, and participation in library programs.

Interviews: Structured interviews would be conducted with 3 teachers and 2 librarians to gather detailed insights into library services and children's reading behaviors.

3.7.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data were pre-existing sources compiled for other purposes (Krishnaswami, 2004). For this study, secondary data will be obtained from books, journals, reports, and TLSB publications relevant to children's reading habits (URT, 2021; National Literacy Trust, 2022).

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3.8 Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis involves identifying patterns and relationships among variables (Kothari, 2004).

Quantitative analysis: Questionnaire data will be coded and analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Results will be presented in tables, percentages, and charts.

Qualitative analysis: Interview data would be analyzed thematically, focusing on recurring patterns and insights related to children's reading habits and library effectiveness (Yusti, 2025).

3.9 Research Ethics

Ethical considerations were central to this study, ensuring the protection of participants' rights, dignity, and welfare (Hicks, 2005). Given that the research involves children, teachers, and librarians, particular care would be taken to safeguard vulnerable groups and uphold professional standards throughout the process.

All information provided by respondents would be treated with strict confidentiality. Personal identifiers such as names will not appear in the final report, and data would be stored securely in password-protected files accessible only to the research team. Informed consent would be obtained from parents or guardians of participating children, as well as from teachers and librarians. This process ensures that participants fully understand the purpose of the study, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their involvement before agreeing to take part.

Participation would be entirely voluntary, with respondents free to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Special attention will be given to children as a vulnerable group, with age-appropriate questionnaires and interviews designed to avoid sensitive or potentially harmful questions. In addition to parental consent, children will be asked for assent in language appropriate to their age, thereby respecting their autonomy.

The study would be conducted with respect and non-maleficence, avoiding any actions that could cause harm, discomfort, or stress to participants. Integrity and transparency would guide all stages of the research, with honesty maintained in data collection, analysis, and

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reporting. Fabrication or falsification of data would be strictly avoided, and findings would be presented accurately.

Finally, the study would comply with institutional and national guidelines, adhering to the ethical standards set by the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB, 2023) and relevant academic institutions. Cultural sensitivity would also be observed, ensuring that local norms and values were respected throughout the research process.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected during the study. The findings are displayed in graph, tables and percentages, followed by detailed explanations. The study assessed children's reading habits in Bagamoyo Public Library by examining the frequency of library visits, factors influencing reading engagement, effectiveness of library services, and challenges hindering the promotion of a reading culture. Data were collected through questionnaires administered to children and interviews conducted with teachers and library staff.

4.1 Distribution of Questionnaires and Interview Responses

Children responded to questionnaires, while teachers and library staff were interviewed face-to-face.

Table 4. 1 Distribution of Questionnaires and Interview Responses (N=25)

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Children (Questionnaires)	20	80%
Teachers (Interviews)	3	12%
Library Staff (Interviews)	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Study (2026)

All questionnaires that were distributed to children were returned, and all interviews with teachers and library staff were successfully conducted. This complete response rate of 100% showed that participants were cooperative and committed to the study. It demonstrated that the research instruments were clear and accessible, which encouraged respondents to provide their input without hesitation.

The high level of participation also indicated that children, teachers, and library staff were genuinely interested in the subject of reading habits and recognized its importance for

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educational development. Their willingness to share experiences and opinions provided the researcher with rich and reliable data that reflected the real situation in Bagamoyo Public Library.

Furthermore, the fact that no questionnaires were left unanswered and no interviews were missed strengthened the credibility of the study. It meant that the findings were based on a complete set of responses, reducing the risk of bias or gaps in information. This comprehensive engagement ensured that the conclusions drawn were grounded in solid evidence and could be confidently used to inform strategies for improving children's reading culture.

4.1.1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender was considered as an important variable in this research because the researcher wanted to include both gender in the study in order get gender balance and therefore avoid gender bias. Hence the variable gender was investigated for this study as presented below

The pie chart below illustrates the gender distribution of who participated in the study.

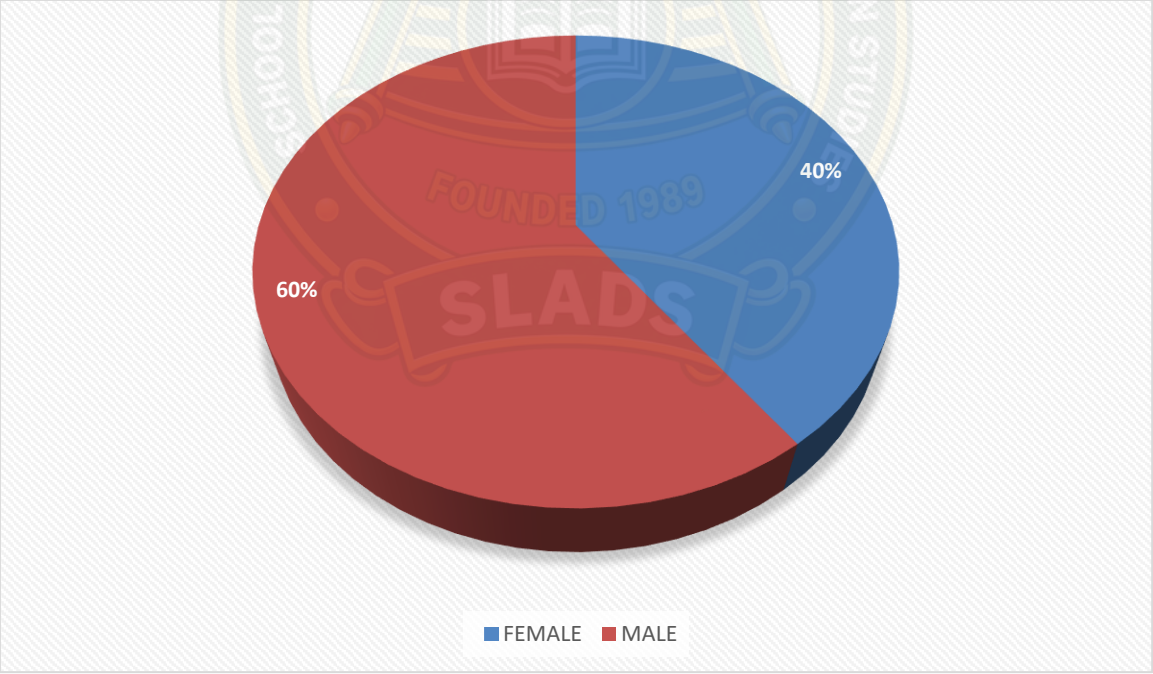


Figure 4. 1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Source: Field Study (2026)

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This distribution shows that boys were slightly more represented than girls among the library users. The difference suggests that boys may be more active in library-related activities, while girls might require additional encouragement to participate in reading programs. However, the gap is not large, indicating that both genders are involved in developing a reading culture at Bagamoyo Public Library.

4.1.3 Age Distribution of Respondents

The age of respondents is a critical feature in research to ensure inclusiveness and diversity among participants. The age distribution of respondents is shown in Table below.

Table 4. 2 Age Distribution of Respondents (N=25)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Children (6–9 years)	8	32%
Children (10–14 years)	12	48%
Teachers (25–34 years)	2	8%
Teachers (35–44 years)	1	4%
Library Staff (35–44 years)	1	4%
Library Staff (45+ years)	1	4%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Study (2026)

The majority of children (60%) were aged 10–14, while 40% were aged 6–9. This indicated that older children were more likely to use the library, possibly because they had more school assignments and stronger literacy skills. Younger children participated as well, but their numbers were lower, which suggested that they required more encouragement and support to develop consistent reading habits.

The age distribution among teachers and staff reflected experienced professionals who supported children's reading development. Teachers were mostly in the 25–34 age group, while library staff were older, with half aged 35–44 and half aged 45 and above. This combination of younger teachers and more experienced staff created a balanced support system for children, blending energy and innovation with experience and stability.

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4.2 Patterns of Library Visits

This figure illustrates the patterns and frequency of children's visits to Bagamoyo Public Library.

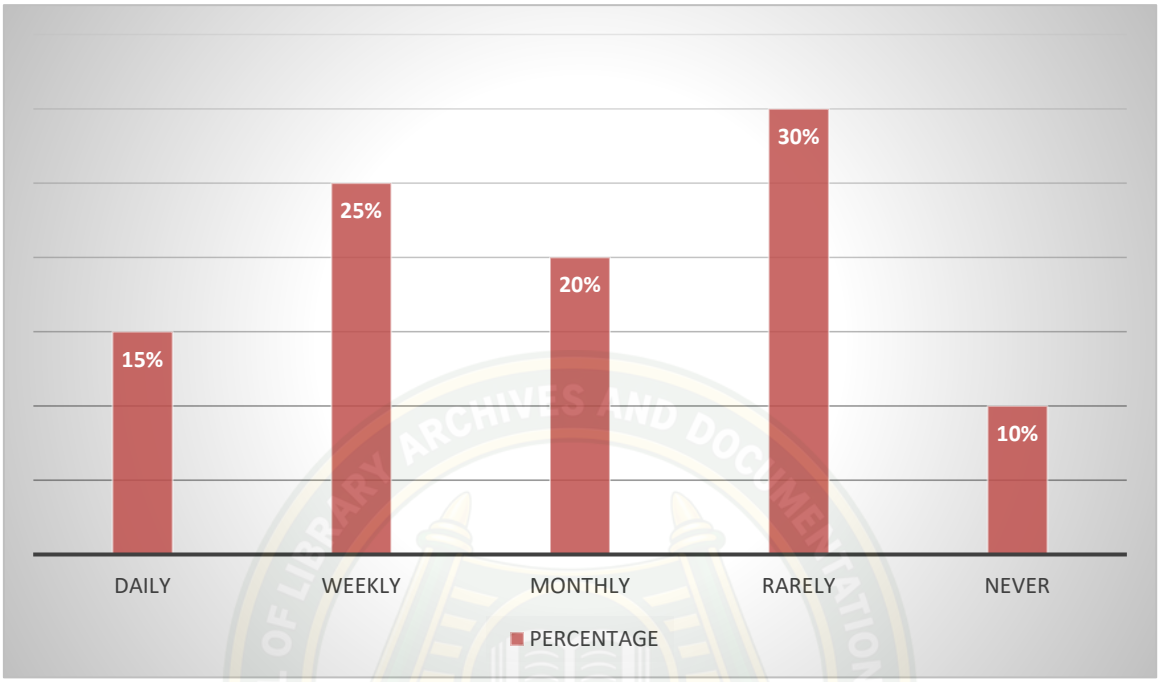


Figure 4. 2 Frequency of Children's Library Visits (N=20)

Source: Field Study (2026)

The findings showed that most children (30%) visited the library rarely, while only 15% visited daily. Weekly visits accounted for 25%, and monthly visits for 20%. A small group (10%) reported never visiting the library.

Teachers *explained that many students use the library mainly for school assignments rather than voluntary reading.* ***Library staff*** *added that the small group of daily visitors are often self-motivated and participate in activities such as storytelling. This confirms that the library needs more attractive programs to encourage those who visit infrequently.*

This distribution indicated that reading habits were inconsistent, with many children relying on occasional visits rather than regular engagement. The small group of daily visitors represented motivated readers who had already developed strong reading habits. These children could serve as examples for their peers if supported through structured programs such as story hours and book clubs.

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The larger group of rare visitors highlighted the need for outreach and awareness campaigns to encourage more frequent library use. Occasional visits suggested that children were aware of the library but did not see it as a regular part of their routine. Addressing this gap required strategies to make the library more attractive and accessible to children

4.3 Factors Influencing Reading Habits

This table highlights the key factors influencing children's reading habits.

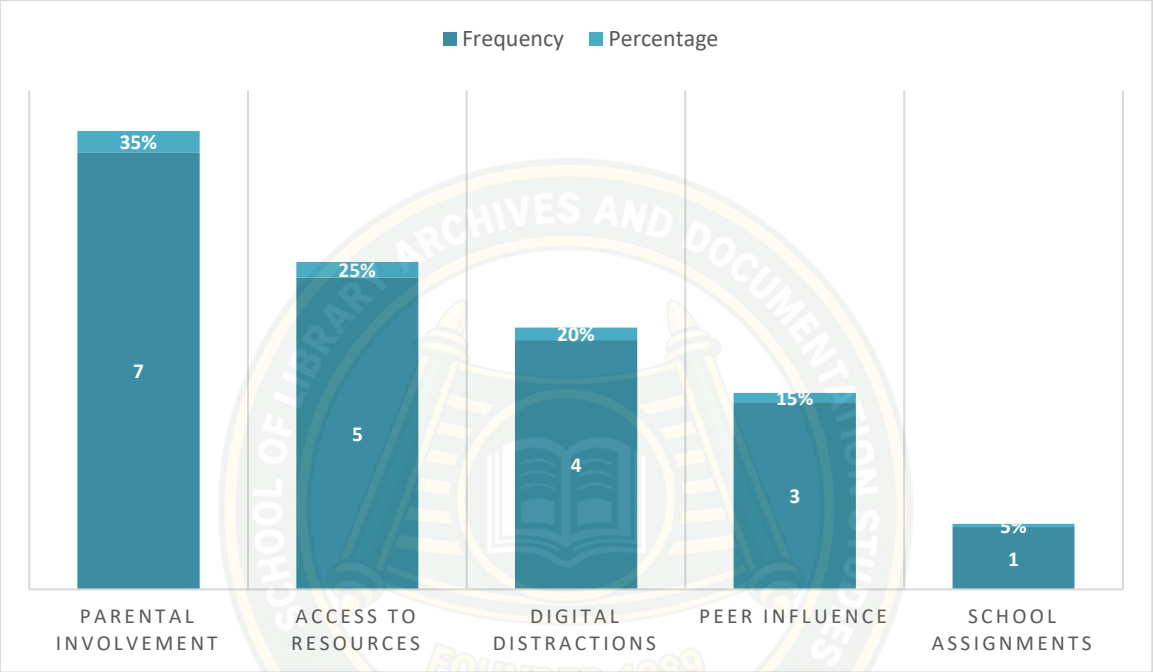


Figure 4. 3 Factors Influencing Children's Reading Habits (N=25)

Source: Field Study (2026)

Parental involvement (35%) was identified as the most significant factor that influenced children's reading habits. This showed that when parents encouraged and supported reading, children were more likely to develop strong habits. Access to resources (25%) was also important, as children needed books and materials to sustain their interest.

Teachers *emphasized that when parents encourage reading at home, students are more likely to develop strong reading habits. Conversely, lack of parental support leaves children dependent only on schoolwork.* ***Library staff*** *noted that limited availability of new and engaging books reduces motivation, while digital distractions divert children's attention.*

Digital distractions (20%) were another factor, showing that technology competed with

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reading for children's attention. Peer influence (15%) played a smaller role, suggesting that while friends could encourage reading, family support was more decisive. School assignments (5%) were the least influential, indicating that children did not rely heavily on academic tasks to shape their reading habits.

Overall, these findings highlighted that family involvement and resource availability were the strongest drivers of reading culture. Without parental support and adequate resources, children struggled to maintain consistent reading habits.

4.4 Effectiveness of Library Services

This figure presents the effectiveness of existing library services in promoting reading habits.

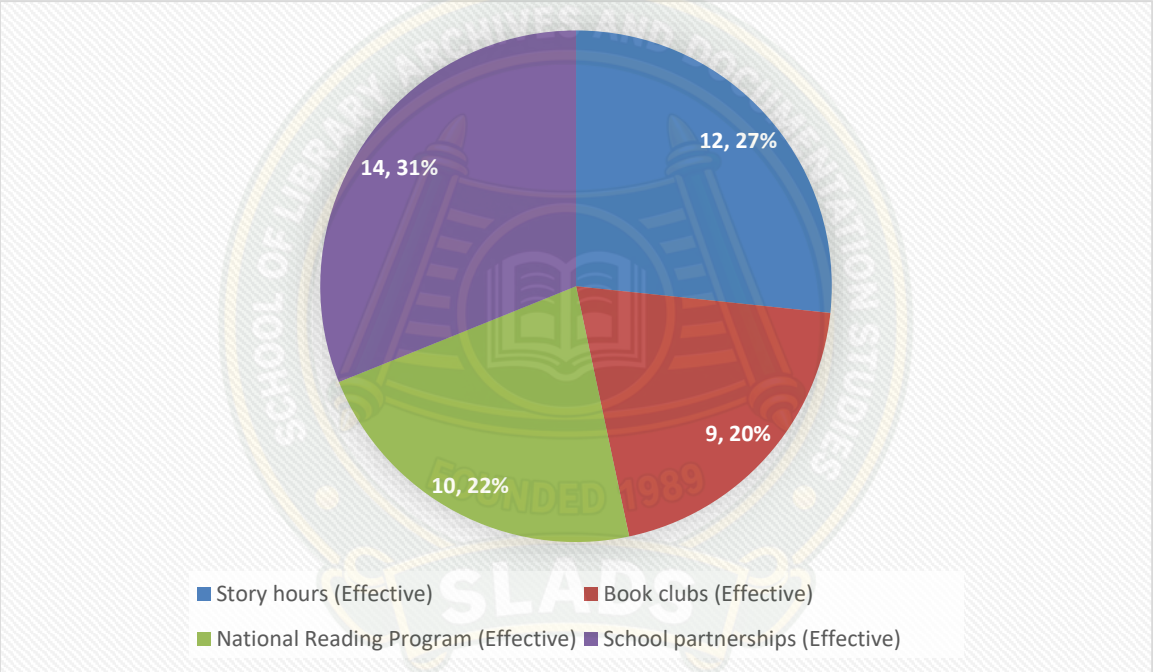


Figure 4. 4 Effectiveness of Library Services (N=25)

Source: Field Study (2026)

School partnerships (31%) were identified as the most effective service, showing that collaboration between libraries and schools significantly boosted children's reading habits. Story hours (27%) were moderately effective, helping children to improve vocabulary and develop interest in reading.

Teachers Add*ressed that collaboration between schools and libraries is crucial, as it directly guides students to use library services.*Book clubs (20%) and the National Reading Program

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(22%) were less effective, possibly due to limited resources and outdated collections. These programs attracted some children but failed to sustain their interest over time.

The findings suggested that while library services contributed to reading development, their effectiveness varied. Programs that involved schools and teachers were more successful, while those that relied solely on library initiatives faced challenges. Strengthening partnerships and updating resources could improve reading.

4.5 Challenges in Promoting Reading Culture

This table outlines the main challenges hindering the promotion of a reading culture among children

Table 4. 3 Challenges in Promoting Reading Culture (N=25)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Limited book availability	6	30%
Low parental involvement	5	25%
Outdated collections	4	20%
Digital distractions	3	15%
Inadequate outreach programs	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Source: Field Study (2026)

Limited book availability (30%) and low parental involvement (25%) were the most pressing challenges. Outdated collections (20%) and digital distractions (15%) also hindered the reading culture. Inadequate outreach programs (10%) showed that libraries were not reaching all children effectively.

Library staff *reported that small budgets and outdated books reduce children's motivation to read.* ***Teachers*** *added that many parents do not encourage reading at home, weakening the support system.*

These challenges revealed that children often lacked access to interesting and updated books, which reduced their motivation to read. Parents were not always involved in encouraging reading, which weakened the support system at home. Digital distractions diverted children's attention away from books, while outreach programs were insufficient to attract new readers.

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The findings highlighted the need for more resources, stronger parental engagement, and innovative outreach strategies to promote a sustainable reading culture. Addressing these challenges required coordinated efforts from libraries, schools, and families to create an environment where reading was valued and supported.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter aims at providing a brief summary of what has been discussed in data analysis, presentation and discussion. It provides the summary of key findings, conclusions, recommendations, and areas for further studies based on the study conducted on the assessment of children's reading habits in Bagamoyo Public Library.

The study involved 25 respondents whereby 20 were children who responded to questionnaires and 5 were teachers and library staff who participated through interviews. The findings were presented according to the objectives of the study which focused on examining the frequency of library visits, identifying factors influencing children's reading engagement, assessing the effectiveness of library services, and determining challenges hindering the promotion of a reading culture.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The findings indicated that all 20 questionnaires distributed to children were returned and all 5 interviews with teachers and library staff were successfully conducted, giving a 100% response rate.

5.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Among children, 12 (60%) respondents were male while 8 (40%) were female. Teachers were mainly male (67%), while library staff had equal gender representation.

5.1.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

Most children (60%) were aged 10–14 years, while 40% were aged 6–9 years. Teachers were mainly in the 25–34 age group, while library staff were older, with half aged 35–44 and half aged 45+.

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5.1.3 Frequency of Library Visits

Most children (30%) visited the library rarely, 25% weekly, 20% monthly, 15% daily, and 10% never visited.

5.1.4 Factors Influencing Children's Reading Habits

Parental involvement (35%) and access to resources (25%) were the strongest factors. Digital distractions (20%), peer influence (15%), and school assignments (5%) were less influential.

5.1.5 Effectiveness of Library Services

School partnerships (70%) were the most effective, followed by story hours (60%). The National Reading Program (50%) and book clubs (45%) were less effective.

5.1.6 Challenges in Promoting Reading Culture

Limited book availability (30%), low parental involvement (25%), outdated collections (20%), digital distractions (15%), and inadequate outreach programs (10%) were the main challenges.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, children's reading habits in Bagamoyo Public Library are shaped primarily by parental involvement and access to resources. The study concludes that while school partnerships and story hours are effective in promoting reading, many children still visit the library infrequently.

The study further concludes that challenges such as limited book availability, outdated collections, low parental involvement, and digital distractions hinder the promotion of a sustainable reading culture. Therefore, libraries, schools, and families should work together to strengthen parental support, improve resources, and enhance library programs to encourage consistent reading habits among children

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the assessment conducted on children's reading habits in Bagamoyo Public Library, several recommendations can be made:

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- **Strengthen Parental Involvement**: Parents play a central role in shaping children's reading culture. The library should organize awareness campaigns, seminars, and workshops to sensitize parents on the importance of encouraging reading at home. When parents actively participate, children are more likely to develop consistent reading habits. Strengthening this involvement will create a supportive environment both at home and in the library.
- **Improve Resource Availability**: The library must increase its budget allocation to purchase new and engaging books, while also replacing outdated collections. Access to diverse and updated resources motivates children to read more frequently. Without adequate resources, children lose interest and rely only on school assignments. Improving resource availability will ensure that the library remains attractive and relevant to children's needs.
- **Enhance Library Programs**: Programs such as story hours, book clubs, and reading competitions should be expanded and modernized. These activities not only improve vocabulary but also make reading enjoyable and interactive. By introducing creative themes and involving children in program design, the library can increase participation. Enhanced programs will transform the library into a lively space that nurtures a reading culture.
- **Strengthen School Partnerships**: Collaboration between schools and the library is essential in promoting reading habits. Schools can integrate library visits into their academic routine, ensuring that children use the library regularly. Teachers can also coordinate with library staff to align reading materials with school curricula. Strengthening these partnerships will make the library a vital extension of classroom learning.
- **Develop Outreach Strategies**: Many children rarely visit the library due to distance or lack of awareness. Outreach strategies such as mobile library services, community reading campaigns, and partnerships with local organizations can help bridge this gap. These initiatives will extend library services beyond its walls, reaching children in schools, villages, and neighborhoods. Outreach ensures inclusivity and promotes equal access to reading opportunities.
- **Address Digital Distractions**: Technology often competes with reading for children's attention. The library should introduce digital literacy programs that teach children how to balance screen time with reading. By integrating e-books and interactive digital platforms, the library can turn technology into a tool that supports

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rather than hinders reading. Addressing digital distractions will help children develop discipline and maintain focus on reading activities.

5.4 Areas for Further Study

Although this study provides valuable insights into children's reading habits in Bagamoyo Public Library, further research could broaden understanding and strengthen interventions in the following areas:

- **Comparative studies across libraries** Future research could compare children's reading habits in different public libraries across Tanzania. Such studies would highlight regional variations, resource disparities, and cultural influences, offering a national perspective on reading culture.
- **Impact of digital tools** With the growing use of e-books, tablets, and educational apps, it is important to examine how digital tools affect children's reading engagement and literacy development. This would help libraries integrate technology effectively without undermining traditional reading practices.
- **Parental attitudes** Investigating parents' perceptions of library use and their role in shaping children's reading culture could reveal how family support influences reading habits. Such studies would guide strategies for involving parents more actively in library programs.
- **Evaluation of outreach programs** Assessing the effectiveness of outreach initiatives aimed at children who rarely visit libraries would provide evidence on which approaches work best. This could include mobile libraries, school partnerships, or community reading campaigns.

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APPENDEX I: RESEARCH TIME SCHEDULE

RESEARCH WORK PLAN SCHEDULE/TIME FRAME

ACTIVITIES	1st MONTH	2nd MONTH	3rd MONTH	4th & 5th MONTH	6th MONTH
Develop questionnaires and Interviews guides					
Data collection, Interviews, survey					
Data Analysis					
Write research report drafts and revisions					
Finalize and submit research report					

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APPENDIX II: RESEARCH BUDGET

Item	Particular	Amount
Preparation of research proposal	Stationaries; Pen 5@500 Pencil 4@ 200 Ruler and Rubber @ 500 Printing 20pgs@ 500 Photocopies 20pgs@ 100 Binding 3 proposal@ 2000	 2500/= 800/= 1,000/= 10,000/= 2,000/= 6,000/=
Data collection process	Transport 30 days@1000 Meal 30 days@ 3000 Preparation of 30 copies of questionnaires and interview@ 100	30000/= 90000/= 3,000/=
Report writing	Printing of report pgs@ 200 Photocopies of the report 42 copies@ 100*5 Binding of the report 3@ 3000	/=10,000 /=21,000 /=9,000
	TOTAL	217,300/=

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APPENDIX III: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR CHILDREN LIBRARY USERS

Dear Respondent,

I am conducting a research study on children reading habit in Tanzania public *libraries* with Bagamoyo district library as the case study. The purpose of this study is to assess the existence, adoption, and challenges of reading among children, and to recommend possible solutions for improving reading habits.

You have been selected to participate in this study because your views and experiences as a library user or staff member are valuable in understanding how library policies affect teaching, learning, and research.

Please note the following:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- The information you provide will be used solely for academic purposes.
- There are no right or wrong answers; we are interested in your honest opinions.

Kindly take a few minutes to complete the attached questionnaire. Your contribution will greatly assist in improving library services and reading culture at Bagamoyo district library.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Instructions: This questionnaire is for children who use Bagamoyo Public Library. Please answer honestly. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. How old are you?

a. 6-10
b. 10-15 [ ]
c. 15-18

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2. Gender?

a. Male [ ]
b. Female

3. How often did you come to the library?"

    a. Every day
    b. Every week [ ]
    c. Every month
    d. Rarely

4. What did you usually do when you came to the library?"

    a. Read storybooks
    b. Do homework or school assignments [ ]
    c. Join library activities (storytelling, clubs)
    d. Other (please say)

5. "How long did you stay in the library each time?

    a. Less than 1 hour
    b. 1–2 hours [ ]
    c. More than 2 hours

6. What kind of books did you like to read most?

    a. Storybooks
    b. Textbooks [ ]
    c. Comics
    d. Newspapers/magazines

7. Did you read books at home when you were not at school?

    a. Yes [ ]
    b. No

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8. Did your parents or guardians encourage you to read?

a. Very often
b. Sometimes [ ]
c. Rarely
d. Never

9. Have you ever joined library programs like storytelling, reading clubs, or competitions?

    a. Yes [ ]
    b. No

10. What problems make it hard for you to use the library?

a. Not enough interesting books
b. Library is far from home
c.
d. No time because of school or chores [ ]
e. Prefer playing or using phone/TV
f. Other (please say)

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APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LIBRARY STAFF

Instructions: This interview guide is intended for librarians and staff working in Bagamoyo Public Library. The questions aim to explore their perspectives on children's reading habits, library services, and challenges in promoting a reading culture.

1. How long have you been working in Bagamoyo Public Library?
2. What is your main role or responsibility in the library?

3. From your experience, how often do children visit the library?
4. What types of reading materials do children prefer (e.g., storybooks, textbooks, digital resources)?
5. Do you observe children engaging in voluntary reading, or do they mostly come for school assignments?

6. What programs or activities does the library currently offer to encourage children's reading (e.g., storytelling, reading clubs)?
7. How effective do you think these programs are in promoting a reading culture among children?

8. What challenges does the library face in attracting children to use its services regularly?
9. How do issues such as limited resources, staffing, or digital distractions affect children's reading habits?
10. What improvements or strategies would you recommend to strengthen children's engagement with the library?

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APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Instructions: This interview guide is designed for teachers who work with children aged 6–14 in Bagamoyo District. The questions aim to explore teachers' perspectives on children's reading habits, the role of libraries, and challenges in promoting a reading culture.

1. How many years have you been teaching in Bagamoyo District?
2. What subjects or grade levels do you currently teach?

3. From your experience, how often do your students read outside of classroom assignments?
4. What types of reading materials do your students prefer (e.g., storybooks, textbooks, digital content)?
5. Do you observe differences in reading habits between boys and girls, or between younger and older children?

6. How often do your students use Bagamoyo Public Library for reading purpose?
7. In what ways do you encourage students to visit or use the library
8. Do you think the library supports your teaching and helps improve students' literacy? Please explain.

9. What challenges do students face in developing consistent reading habits (e.g., lack of books, parental support, digital distractions)?
10. What strategies or improvements would you recommend to strengthen collaboration between schools and libraries in promoting a reading culture?

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APPENDIX VI RESEARCH PERMIT

WIZARA YA ELIMU, SAYANSI NA TEKNOLOJIA
BODI YA HUDUMA ZA MAKTABA TANZANIA
MAKTABA YA WILAYA BAGAMOYO



Ref.No.BGM.150/280/15/59 **6/8/2026**

School of Library Archive and Documentation studies,
P.O BOX 227,
BAGAMOYO.

RE : PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WORK

Please refer to the above mention subject,
This is to inform you that **SHEDRACK A. ALLY** has been permissioned to conduct reseach work at Bagamoyo District Library which will start 8-08-2026 to 12-08-2026.
On the Research title ;-
AN ASSESMENT ON CHILDREN READING HABIT IN TANZANIA ; A CASE STUDY OF BAGAMOYO PUBLIC LIBRARY

We wish you success in your research,
Thank you in advance.

Regards,
JEMA MOLEL

DISTRICT LIBRARIAN.

TANZANIA LIBRARY SERVICE BOARD
BAGAMOYO DISTRICT LIBRARY
P.O. BOX 1
BAGAMOYO

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